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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 6722nd meeting of the Security Council, held on 23 February 2012, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Women and peace and security", the President of the Council issued the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010) on Women and Peace and Security and all relevant statements of its Presidents.

"The Security Council thanks the Secretary-General for his report entitled "Conflict-Related Sexual Violence" (S/2012/33), and takes note of the analysis and recommendations contained therein.

"The Security Council is deeply concerned about incidents, trends, and patterns of sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations, including the deliberate targeting of civilians for sexual violence, inter alia, for political motivations, and its use as a tactic of war. The Council further notes with concern that sexual violence disproportionately affects women and girls, while also affecting men and boys. The Council stresses that acts of sexual violence not only severely undermine the critical contribution of women to society, but also challenge inclusive and sustainable peace processes.

"In the context of the full implementation of resolution 1960 (2010), the Security Council stresses the need for continued timely, verified, and accurate data collection through the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements (MARA) on sexual violence in situations of armed conflict and post conflict and other situations relevant to the implementation of resolution 1888 (2009), which will contribute to better informed discussions and assist the Council's consideration of appropriate action, possibly including targeted and graduated measures. The Council stresses that approaches to data collection and reporting should adhere to safe and ethical practices and maintain the dignity of the victim at all times.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of prevention, early warning, and effective response to sexual violence when it is used as a tactic of war or as part of a widespread or systematic attack against civilian populations.

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"The Security Council encourages UN peacekeeping missions to draw upon, where appropriate, the publication by UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, which compiles peacekeeping practices, as a reference tool to prevent sexual violence more effectively.

"The Security Council urges all parties to conflict to comply fully with their obligations under applicable international law, including the prohibition of all forms of sexual violence. The Council reiterates its strong condemnation of all violations of applicable international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, in armed conflict and post-conflict situations, in particular acts of sexual violence. The Council urges the complete cessation of such acts with immediate effect. The Council notes that impunity for perpetrators can undermine confidence in existing institutions and promote instability.

"The Security Council reiterates that the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern committed against women and girls has been strengthened through the work of the International Criminal Court, ad hoc and mixed tribunals, as well as specialized chambers in national tribunals. The Council further reiterates its intention to enhance its efforts to fight impunity and uphold accountability for serious crimes against women and girls with appropriate means and draws attention to the full range of justice and reconciliation mechanisms to be considered, including national, international, and mixed criminal courts and tribunals, truth and reconciliation commissions as well as national reparation programs for victims, institutional reforms and traditional dispute resolution mechanisms.

"The Security Council encourages Member States and the UN system to continue raising awareness of the impact that sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations has on victims, families, communities and societies. The Council stresses the importance of countering negative societal attitudes towards survivors of sexual violence that can lead to their exclusion from communities or other discriminatory practices.

"The Security Council calls on Member States with the support of the UN system and other relevant stakeholders to increase access to health care, psychosocial support, legal assistance and socio-economic reintegration services for victims of sexual violence, in particular in rural areas. The Council stresses the importance of ensuring that such incidents can be reported safely.

"The Security Council continues to encourage Member States to deploy greater numbers of female military and police personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations and reiterates that all UN military, police personnel, and other personnel should be provided with adequate training, including on sexual and gender based violence, to carry out their responsibilities. The Council acknowledges the efforts of the Secretary-General to continue and strengthen efforts to implement the zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse by all United Nations personnel. The Council looks forward to the deployment of women protection advisers to UN missions, as called for in Resolutions 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), and 1960 (2010).

"The Security Council reiterates the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflict and in peacebuilding. The Council notes with concern the continuing under-representation of women in formal peace processes and recognizes the Secretary-General's efforts to address this under-representation. In this regard, the Council reiterates the call made in General Assembly Resolution 66/130 (2011) to increase the role of women in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000).

"The Security Council reiterates the importance of addressing sexual violence issues from the outset of peace processes, mediation efforts, ceasefires, and peace agreements, particularly in provisions for security arrangements, transitional justice, and reparations. The Council stresses the need for mediators and ceasefire monitors to be properly trained in how to address sexual violence.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of addressing sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations in the context of security sector reform initiatives and arrangements, including training, vetting, and capacity-building of national security actors.

"The Security Council commends the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict in carrying out her mandate in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions. The Council underlines the importance of her mandate and the mandate of the Team of Experts-Rule of Law/Sexual Violence in Conflict, which contribute to the women and peace and security agenda. The Council invites the Special Representative to continue to provide briefings and information consistent with her mandate and the Secretary-General to recommend appropriate actions."